

PRESS RELEASE

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Juan Alvarez-Velazquez, 40, Janesville, Wis., was sentenced yesterday by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 77 months in federal prison for illegal re-entry into the United States after deportation.

On September 19, 2007, Alvarez-Velazquez was charged in a one-count indictment with illegally re-entering the United States after being deported. He pleaded guilty to that charge on January 12, 2008. According to the government, Alvarez-Velazquez was deported to Mexico at the border crossing in Laredo, Texas on March 19, 2007. He re-entered the United States shortly thereafter and was arrested by the Rock County Sheriff's Department on June 6, 2007.

At the sentencing hearing, Alvarez-Velazquez asked the court for a reduced sentence arguing that he should not be punished for re-entering the United States given the fact that Mexico was a strange and foreign place to him. According to Alvarez-Velazquez, it was unfair to deport him back to Mexico because he had culturally assimilated to the United States and considered the United States his home, not Mexico.

Judge Crabb rejected this argument finding that Alvarez-Velazquez had not

become a productive member of society given his lengthy criminal record; the fact that he was \$77,000 in arrears on his child support; and given his numerous drunk-driving convictions and other traffic offenses. Judge Crabb also pointed out that, "like-it-or-not," after serving his federal prison term, Alvarez-Velazquez would be deported back to Mexico, and the judge ordered him not to return to the United States.

The charges against Alvarez-Velazquez were the result of an investigation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Rock County Sheriff's Department. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Dan Graber.

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